

**San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) #5004552**

**Strategic Control of Invasive Weed Species
4th Quarter Report - FY 2025-26: Report #46 for Project**

April 1st, 2026 – June 30th, 2026

Project: County of San Diego, Department of Agriculture, Weights & Measures –
Strategic Removal of Invasive Weed Species

To: Kim Smith
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Project:

Invasive plants are considered one of the biggest threats to endangered species and their habitats. A strategic plan for managing non-native invasive plant species in San Diego County was completed in 2012 through a SANDAG contract to the Conservation Biology Institute (CBI) (<http://sdmmp.com>). The Invasive Plant Strategic Plan (IPSP) is designed to develop a strategic approach towards the eradication and management of invasive plants in the San Diego region. The IPSP is meant to work in conjunction with the Management Strategic Plan for Conserved Lands in Western San Diego County (MSP) ([Management Strategic Plan](#)).

This Scope of Work will require the contractor to focus on the management of invasive plants identified in Levels 1, 2, and 3 of the IPSP. The following tasks have been identified as necessary to implement this effort:

This quarterly report covers work funded through the SANDAG Contract, which allowed work to occur from April 1st to June 30th, 2026.

TASK 1 – Invasive Plant Species Coordinator:

Level of Effort: (25%) of overall contract

Right of Entry (ROE) work and coordination with property owners and crews:

Coordination with property owners, land managers and AWM crew occurred throughout the quarter. This supported work this quarter and preparation for the next quarter.

The coordinator worked on multiple species at sites across the county:

Current work sites were visited and assessed to time control work (Ward's Weed, Yellow Star Thistle, Spotted Knapweed, Santa Maria Feverfew, Canary Island St John's Wort). The

coordinator pulled and bagged plants at some of these sites, maps and work descriptions are presented below.

Planning for field site treatments by crew occurred. Sites were ordered by priority and field day estimates generated.

Regulatory permits:

No new work.

Report preparation:

The quarterly report was prepared and submitted.

Mapping and occurrence data:

Reviewing iNaturalist EDRR observations (confirming and correcting IDs), as well as mapping and surveying for new populations occurred. GIS coverage of all sites was updated (points). GIS coverage of all work was updated (polygons). A new location for Santa Maria Feverfew was reported as well as for the two Limonium species.

Work plan:

Work crew priorities by species and sites were updated.

TASK 2 – AWM: Invasive Plant Level 1 Management

Level of Effort: (<10%) of overall contract.

Level 1 Management Species are EDRR targets that were **not known to occur** in the county when the IPSP was written (2012).

Crews surveyed and treated two level 1 species this quarter: barbed goatgrass and Santa Maria Feverfew. Maps for the site show treated areas (red polygons) and surveyed areas as white lines which track pathways used by crews to survey and control plants. AWM IPC carried out optimal plant control, either hand pulling or using pesticide applications, protected the natural environment by preventing off-site movement of pesticides, and utilized Best Management Practices (BMPs) that prevented unintentional discharges to surface waters. For each site, AWM IPC followed the following procedures:

1. Identified the pest species to be treated.
2. Reviewed site conditions, such as soil texture, slope, standing water, irrigation or storm drains.
3. Identified and avoided streamside management areas and surface waters to prevent drift and application of pesticides not labeled for aquatic use onto surface waters.
4. Identified most appropriate method of control based on integrated pest management methods, designed to minimize the scale and number of pesticide applications.
5. Applied the least persistent and least toxic pesticide that effectively mitigates the target pest.

Table 1. Summary of treatments performed by AWM on Level 1 species this quarter.

Scientific Name	Common Name	# of Sites Worked	Acres Surveyed	Acres Treated	Plants Controlled
<i>Aegilops triuncialis</i>	Barbed Goatgrass	1	4.0	1.3	4,060
<i>Parthenium hysterophorus</i>	Santa Maria Feverfew	2	1.5	0.1	500

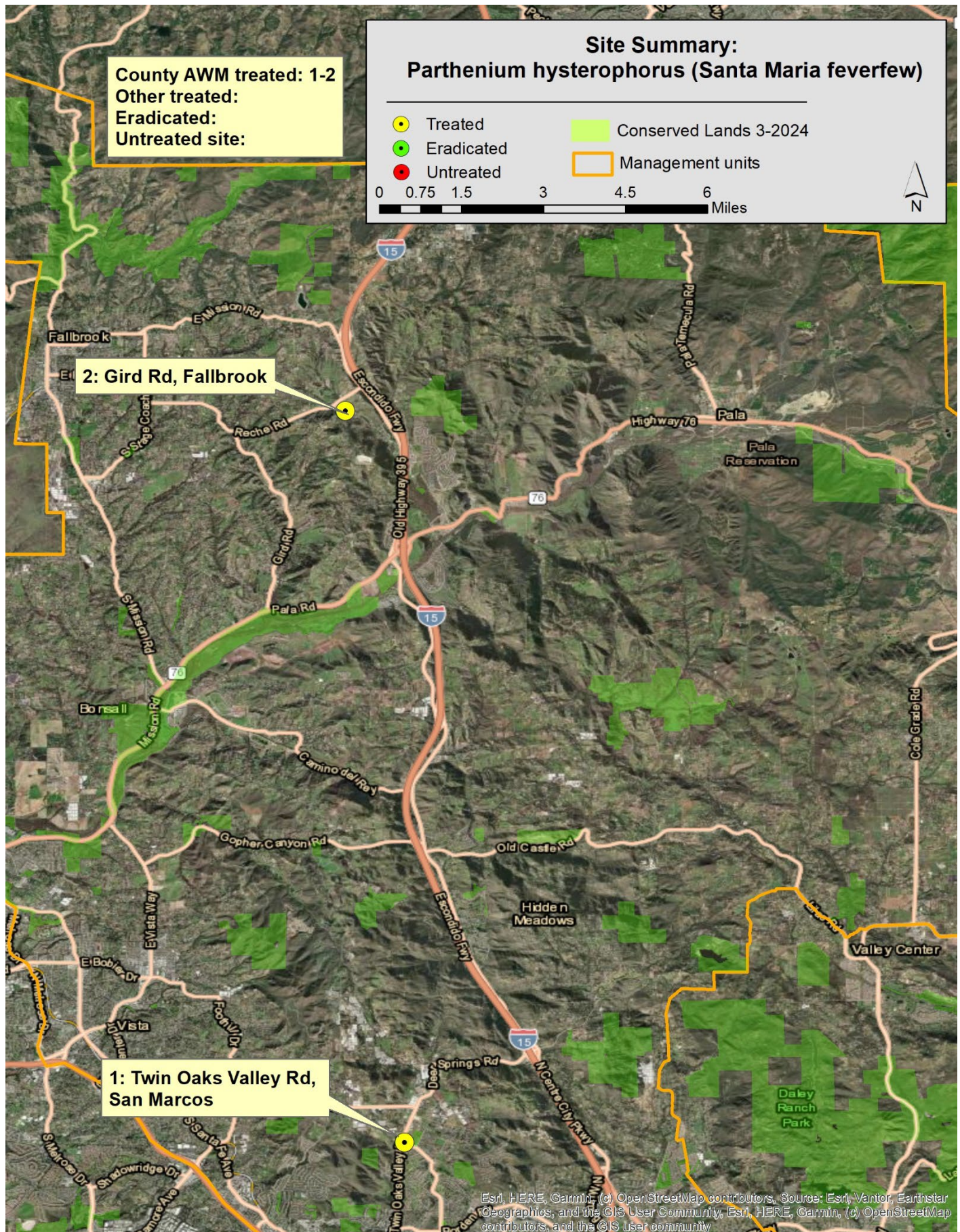


Table 2. Summary of treatments performed by AWM on *Parthenium hysterophorus* (Santa Maria Feverfew).

Work Site	Common Name	# of Work Cycles	Acres Surveyed	Acres Treated	Plants Controlled
Site #1 Twin Oaks Valley Road, San Marcos	Santa Maria Feverfew	1	1.0	0	0
Site #2 Gird Road, Fallbrook	Santa Maria Feverfew	1	0.5	0.1	500

***Parthenium hysterophorus* (Santa Maria Feverfew): Site #1 Twin Oaks Valley Road**

The coordinator visited the site on May 20th, 2026. No plants were seen. The site will be revisited again in July.



Parthenium hysterophorus (Santa Maria Feverfew): Site #1 Twin Oaks Valley Road

This is a new site reported on iNaturalist. The coordinator visited the site on June 26th, 2026. 500 plants in total were pulled from three spots. Plants were growing in areas that were disturbed and open, bank stabilization in these three areas occurred a few years ago. No plants were seen further upstream (stopped at Gird Rd) or downstream (stopped at golf course). Further surveying will occur if property owners grant access.

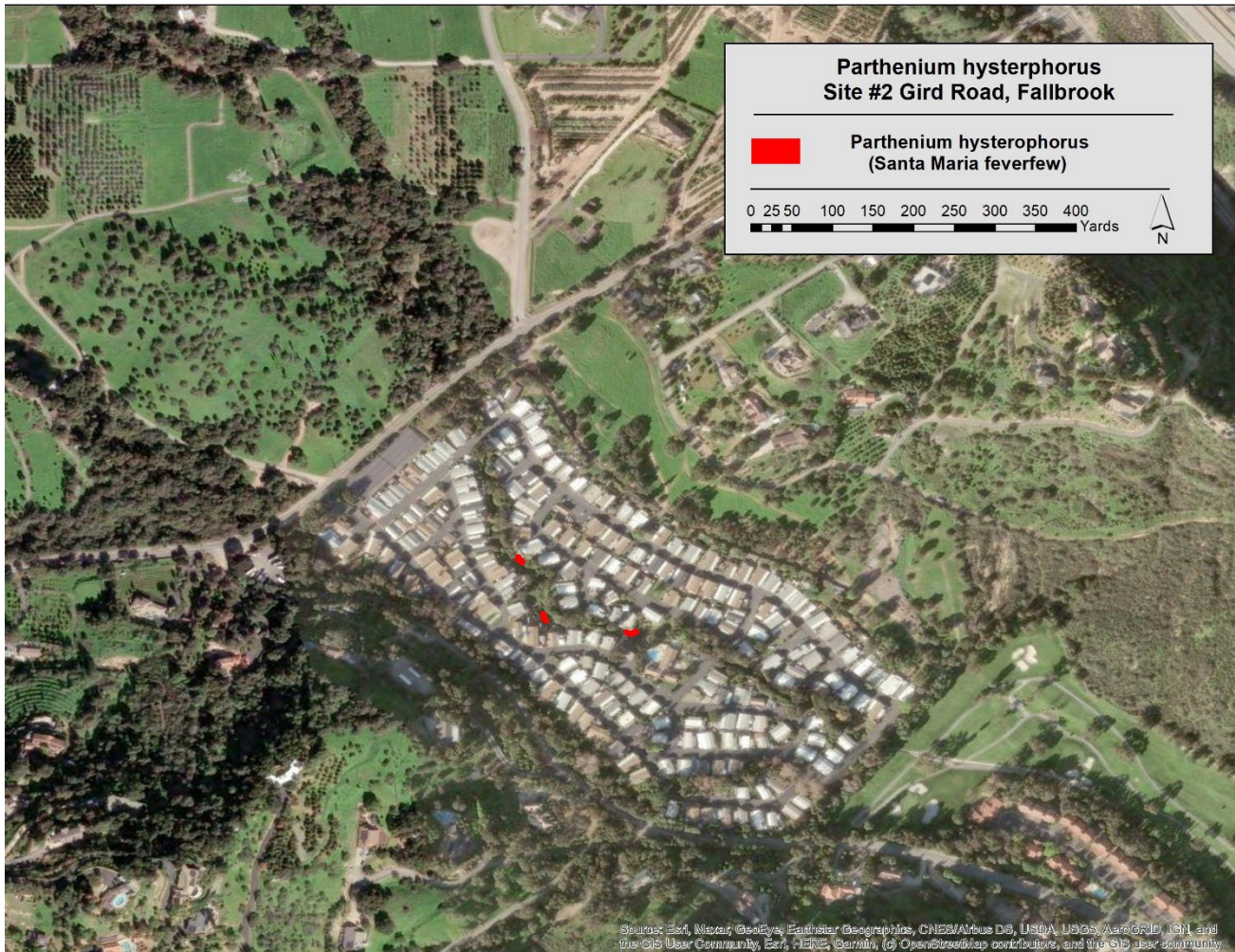
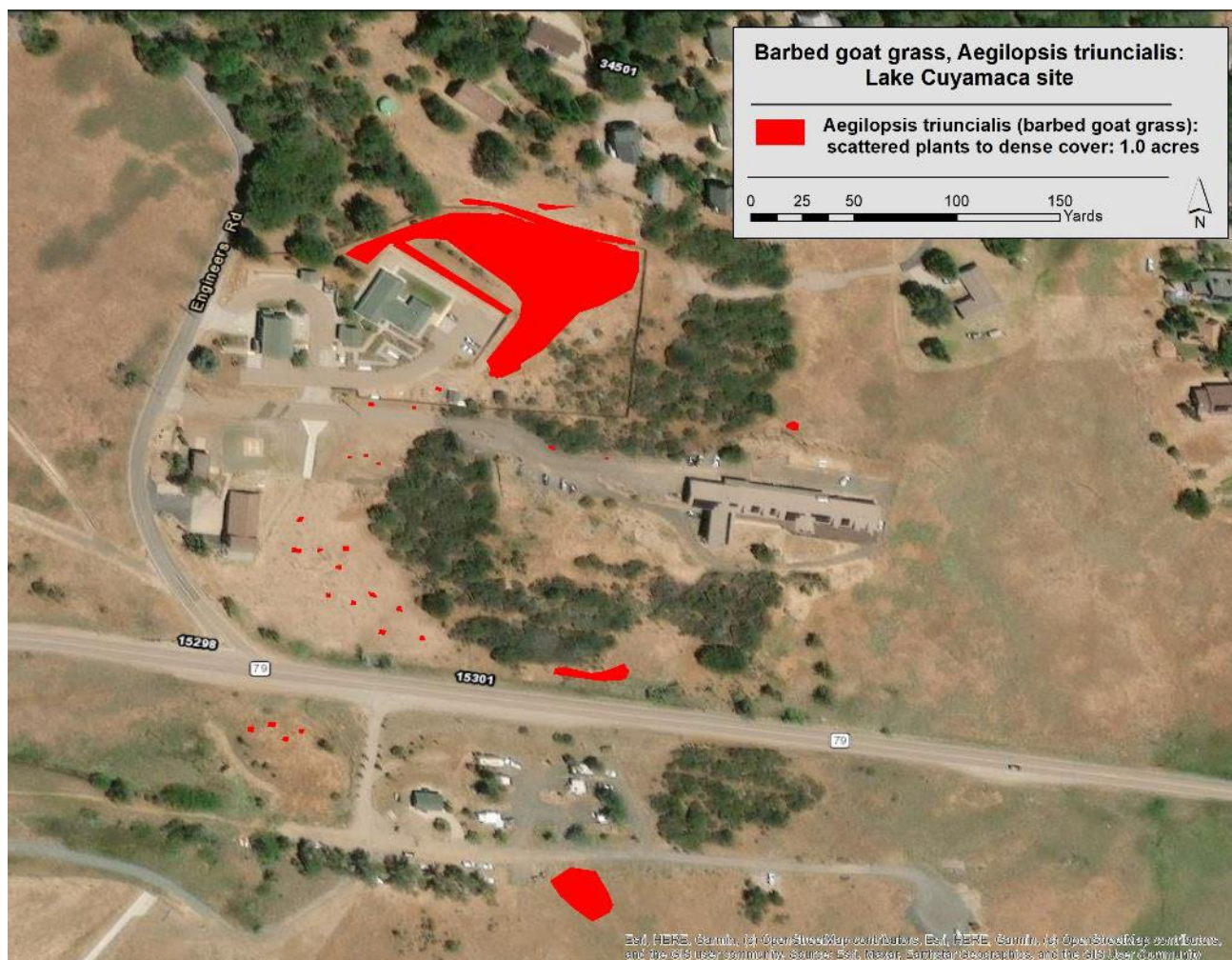


Table 3. Summary of treatments performed by AWM on *Aegilops triuncialis* (Barbed Goatgrass).

Work Site	Common Name	# of Work Cycles	Acres Surveyed	Acres Treated	Plants Controlled
Site #2 Lake Cuyamaca	Barbed Goatgrass	1	5.5	1.3	2,250

***Aegilops triuncialis* (Barbed Goatgrass): Site #2 Lake Cuyamaca**

An AWM crew of one to two individuals controlled Barbed Goat Grass over 7 days between May 14th and June 2nd, 2026. The crew started treatments early, as plants matured early due to warm weather and early rains. The crew spot treated plants with post-emergent. This remains the only site in the County, but control has been very challenging.



TASK 3 – AWM: Invasive Plant Level 2 Management.

Level of Effort: (>40%) of overall contract

Level 2 Management Species are EDRR targets that were of limited distribution in the county when the IPSP was written (2012).

Crews surveyed and treated four Level 2 invasive weed species (Ward's Weed, Yellow Star Thistle, Spotted Knapweed, and Canary Island St John's Wort) at six sites this quarter. AWM IPC made optimal pesticide applications, protected the natural environment by preventing off-site movement of pesticides, and utilized Best Management Practices (BMPs) that prevented unintentional discharges to surface waters. For each site, AWM IPC followed the following procedures:

1. Identified the pest species to be treated.
2. Reviewed site conditions, such as soil texture, slope, standing water, irrigation or storm drains.
3. Identified and avoided streamside management areas and surface waters to prevent drift and application of pesticides not labeled for aquatic use onto surface waters.
4. Identified most appropriate method of control based on integrated pest management methods, designed to minimize the scale and number of pesticide applications.
5. Applied the least persistent and least toxic pesticide that effectively mitigates the target pest.

Table 4. Summary of treatments performed by AWM on Level 2 species this quarter.

Scientific Name	Common Name	# of Sites Worked	Acres Surveyed	Acres Treated	Plants Controlled
<i>Carrichtera annua</i>	Ward's Weed	1	0.3	0.1	1,000
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	Yellow Star Thistle	1	0.2	0.1	600
<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Spotted Knapweed	1	2.5	0.6	1,730
<i>Hypericum canariense</i>	Canary Island St. John's Wort	3	31.0	3.6	5,327



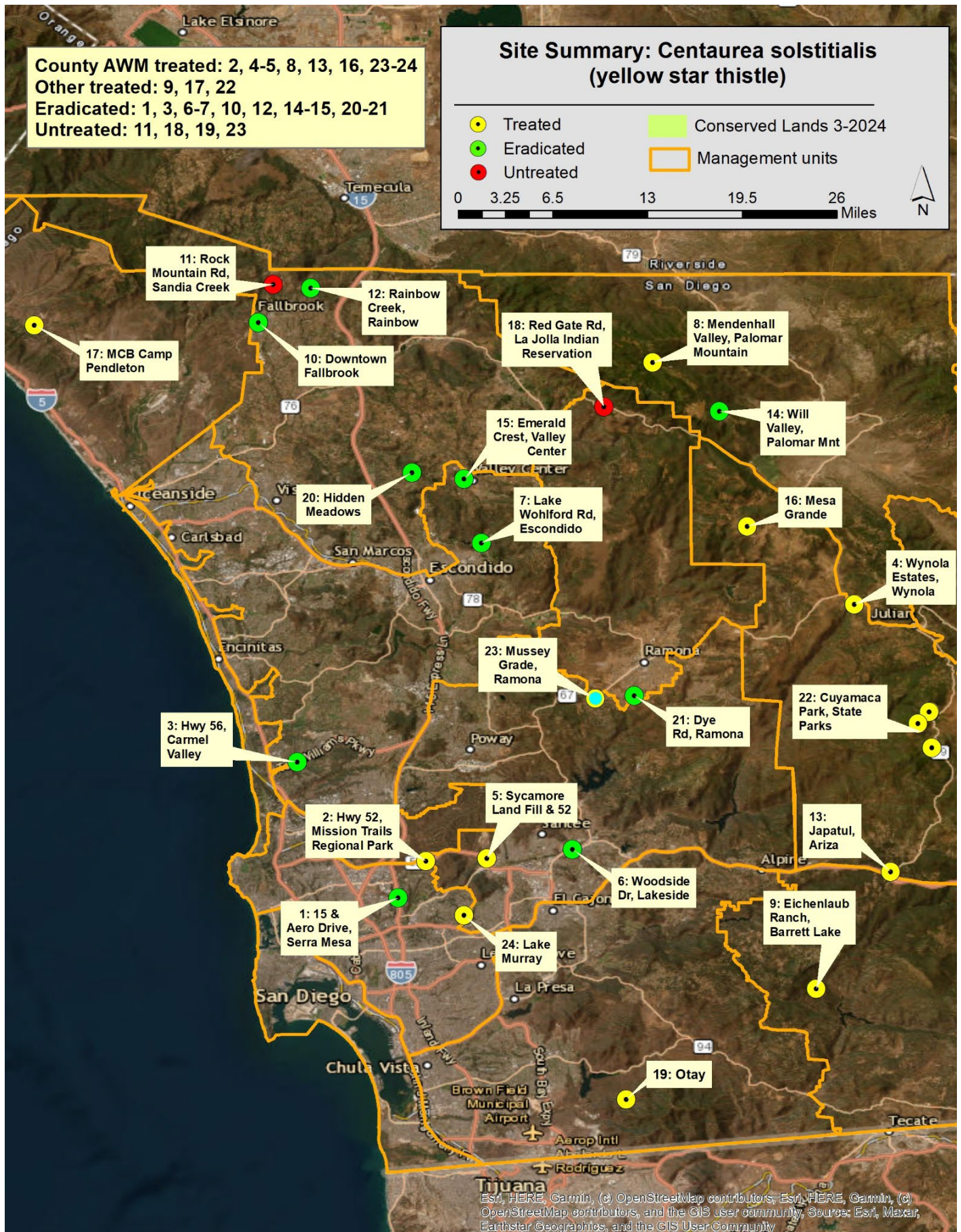
Carrichtera annua (Ward's Weed): Site #7 San Elijo Hills, San Marcos

Table 5. Summary of treatments performed by AWM on *Carrichtera annua* (Ward's Weed).

Site Name	Common Name	# of Work Cycles	Acres Surveyed	Acres Treated	Plants treated
Site #7 San Elijo Hills, San Marcos	Wards Weed	1	0.3	0.1	1,000

The coordinator visited the site on May 21st and 26th, 2026. 1,000 plants in total were pulled from an area that did not have good pre-emergent application in the winter. Other areas at the site had few to no plants emerging.





***Centaurea solstitialis* (Yellow Star Thistle): Site #13 Japatul**

A crew of one AWM worked finished treatments at Japatul on April 2nd, 2026. 600 plants were treated with post-emergent.



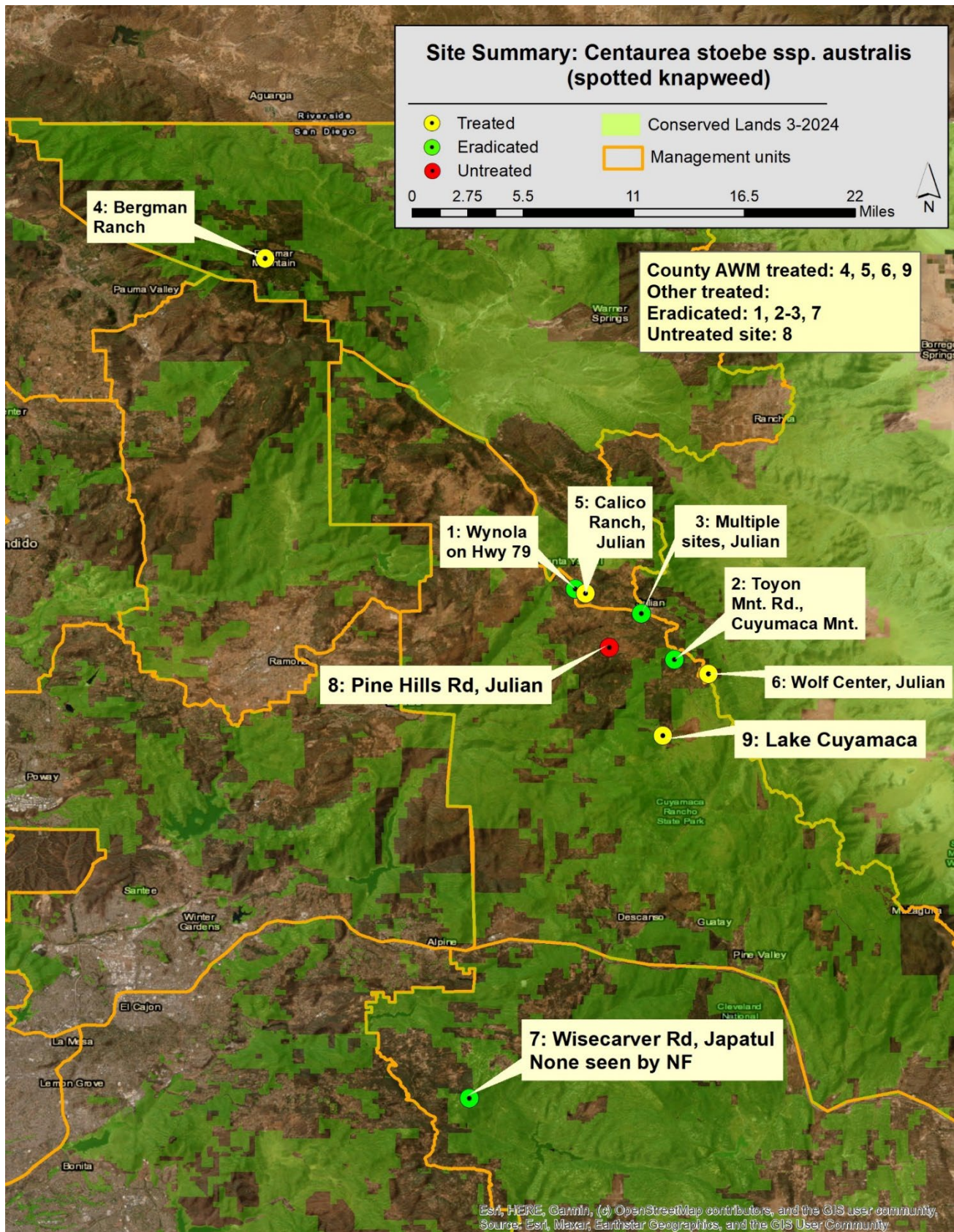
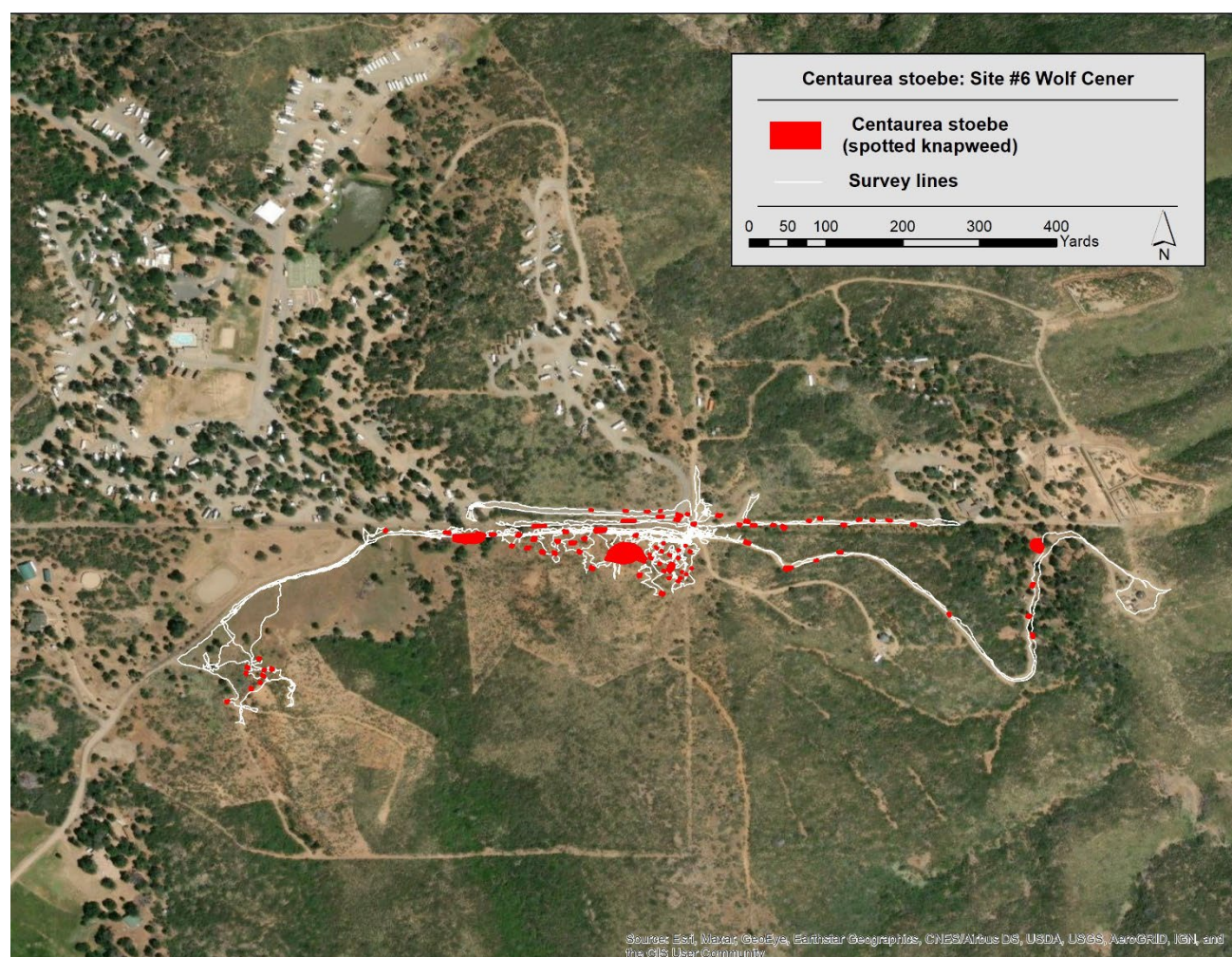


Table 6. Summary of treatments performed by AWM on *Centaurea stoebe* (Spotted Knapweed).

Site Name	Common Name	# of Visits	Acres Surveyed	Acres Treated	Plants treated
Site #6, Labbe/Wolf Center	Spotted Knapweed	1	2.0	0.5	1,480
Site #9 Lake Cuyamaca	Spotted Knapweed	1	0.5	0.1	250

***Centaurea stoebe* (Spotted Knapweed): Site #6 Wolf Center, Julian**

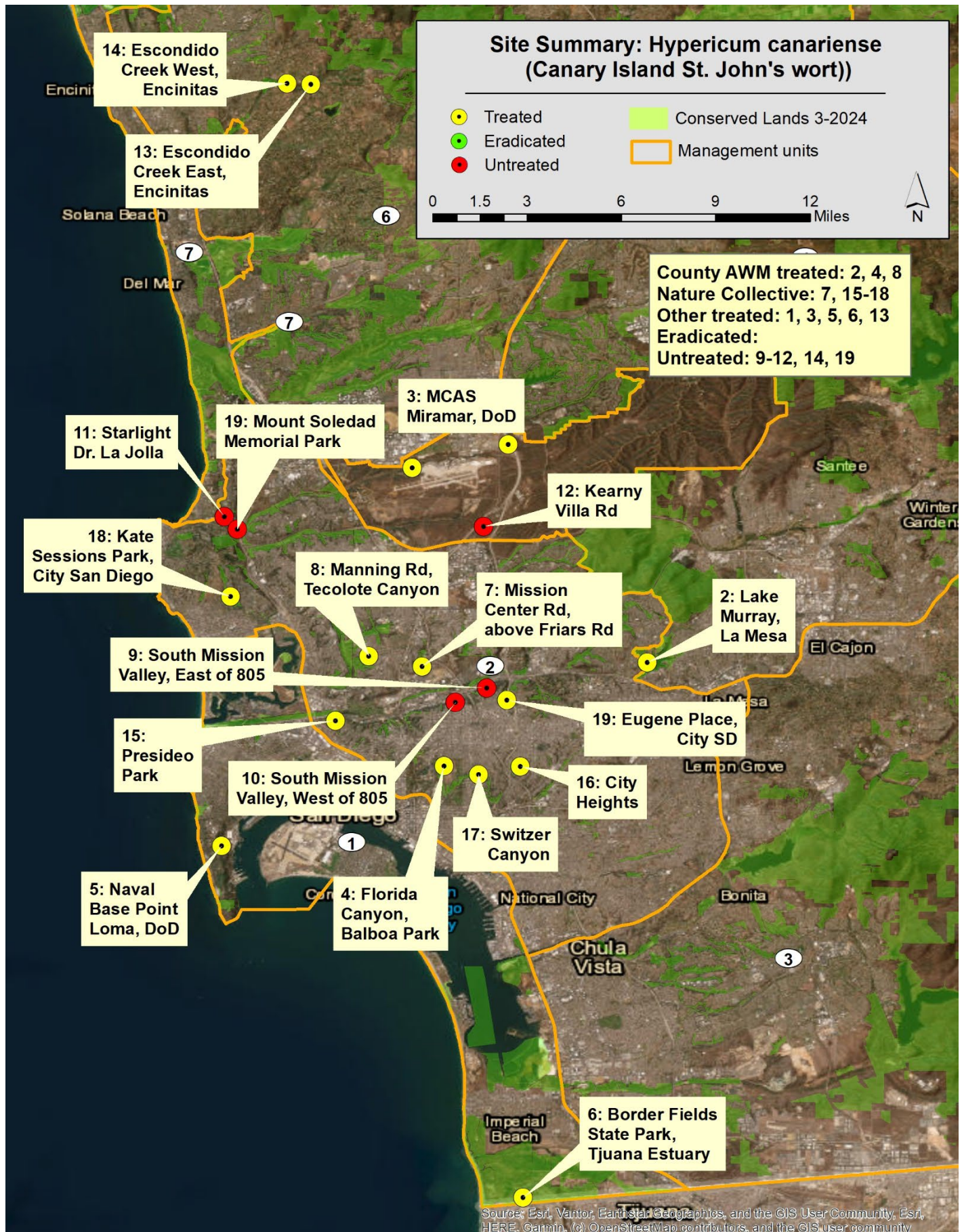
A crew of one AWM worker worked five days between June 15th to June 24th, 2026. 1,480 plants were treated with a post-emergent. 1,080 plants were treated in 2025, 980 in 2024, 2,500 plants in 2023, 1,184 plants in 2022 and 1,870 plants in 2021.



Centaurea stoebe (Spotted Knapweed): Site #9 Lake Cuyamaca

The coordinator worked one day on April 23rd, 2026. 250 plants were pulled and bagged. This was the second round of treatment; 400 plants were pulled in 2025. This population was first reported on iNaturalist in 2025.



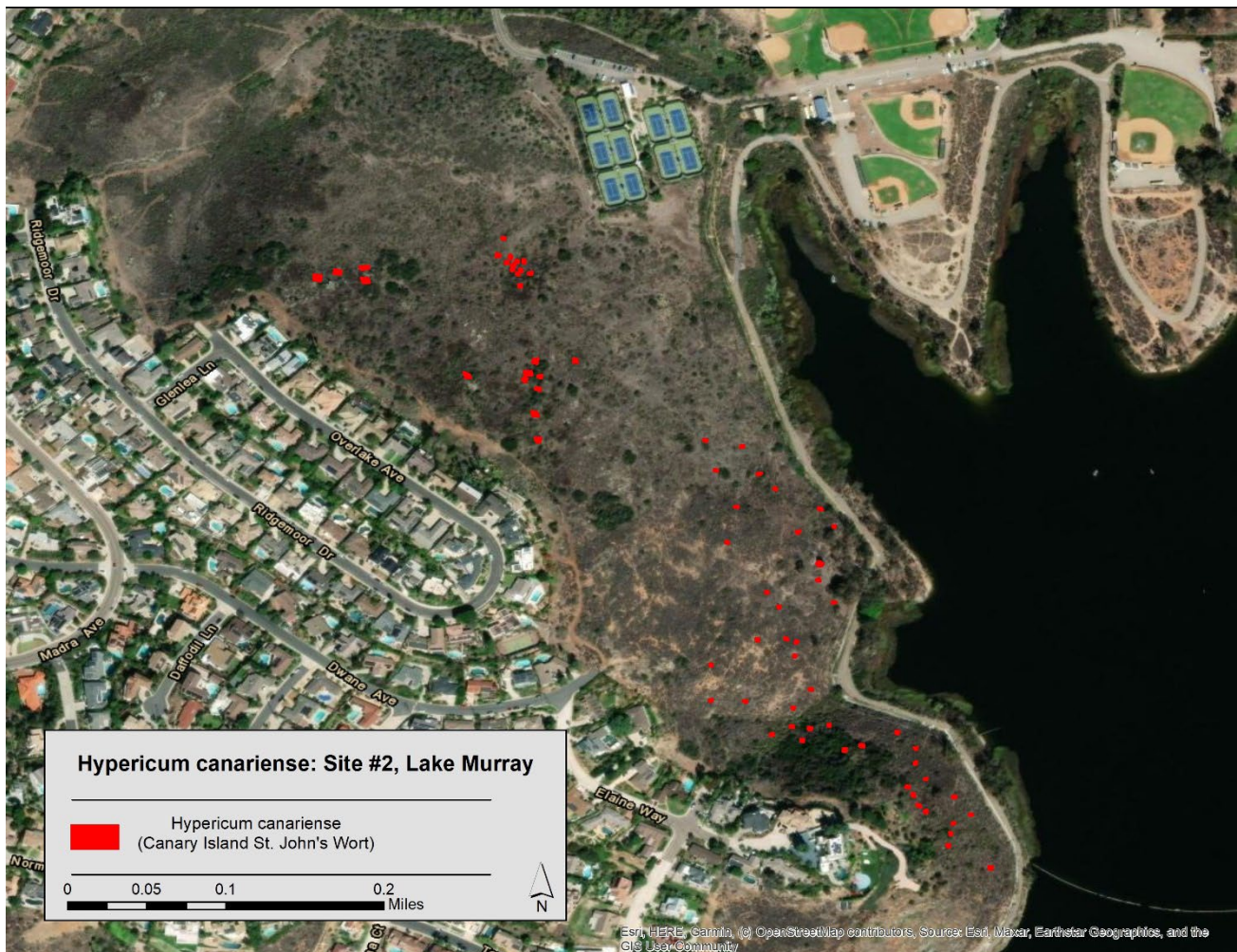


Hypericum canariense (Canary Island St. John's Wort): Site #2 Lake Murray

Table 7. Summary of treatments performed by AWM on *Hypericum canariense* (Canary Island St. John's Wort).

Site Name	Common Name	# of Visits	Acres Surveyed	Acres Treated	Plants treated
Site #2 Lake Murray	Canary Island St. John's Wort	1	11.0	1.1	2,890

A crew of one to two individuals visited the site over eleven days from June 1st to the 24th, 2026. Plants were treated with a post-emergent. In 2025 the site was too dormant to treat with 110 plants controlled, 745 plants were controlled in 2024, and 850 plants were controlled in 2023.



Hypericum canariense (Canary Island St. John's Wort): Site #4 Balboa Park

Table 8. Summary of treatments performed by AWM on *Hypericum canariense* (Canary Island St. John's Wort).

Site Name	Common Name	# of Visits	Acres Surveyed	Acres Treated	Plants treated
Site #4, Balboa Park	Canary Island St. John's Wort	1	1.9	0.2	2,187

2,187 small plants (60%) and seedlings (40%) were treated with a post-emergent. A crew of one to two individuals visited the site over seventeen days (one day had a crew of five) from April 17th to May 29th, 2026. Cover is greatly reduced (>95% cover reduction), but there were many scattered seedlings still emerging. In 2025 680 plants were treated (a partial treatment), 2,270 plants were treated in 2024 and 1,715 plants treated in 2023.



TASK 4 – AWM: Invasive Plant Level 3 Management.

No work occurred on this task.

TASK 5 – Coordinator: Tracking and Updating Invasive Species for Priority Removal.

Level of Effort: (5%) of overall contract

- Reviewing and surveying reports from iNaturalist.
- Co-ordination with San Diego Weed Management Area at the quarterly meeting. Presentation on EDRR and Stinknet at annual meeting held at Mission Trails Park. About 100 people attended.
- Co-ordination to survey and control European and Algerian Sea Lavender species in South San Diego Bay. Managers from FWS, DoD, SDMMP and CBI discussed expanded and coordinated surveying and treatment.

Work Anticipated for 3rd Quarter Period, July 1st – September 31st, 2026

This work will be under a new Agreement.

Task 1 – Invasive Plant Species Coordinator:

- Coordinate ROE work with AWM, update database.
- Monitor and coordinate with AWM during implementation.
- Survey and map sites as needed.
- Prepare quarterly report.

Task 2 – AWM: Invasive Plant Level 1 Management.

- Survey, map, and treat any reported sightings of target Level 1 plants: Barbed Goat Grass and Volutaria.
- Supervision of staff, provide training, guidance, and preparation for field work.
- Collect GIS treatment polygons and survey routes (lines) of targeted weeds.

Task 3 – AWM: Invasive Plant Level 2 Management.

- Survey, map, and treat any reported sightings of target Level 2 plants: Ward's Weed, Eupatory, and Limonium.
- Re-treatment of sites: Spotted Knapweed, Yellow Star Thistle, Barbed Goat Grass and Bridal and French Brooms.
- Supervision of staff, provide training, guidance, and preparation for field work.

- Coordinate and finalize tracking methods for work completed.
- Initiate and continue work outlined in work plan.
- Obtain signed ROEs.
- Collect new GIS treatment polygons and survey routes (lines) of targeted weeds. Upload data to Calflora.

Task 4 – AWM: Invasive Plant Level 3 Management.

- Survey, map, and treat any reported sightings of target Level 3 plants: Stinknet. No work likely.

Task 5 – Coordinator: Tracking and Updating Invasive Species for Priority Removal.

- Continue coordination with: Department of Defense, California State Parks, City Department of Parks and Recreation, San Diego Weed Management Area and County of Orange CNPS EDRR invasives group.
- Continue to aggregate data and track new prospective EDRR target species.
- Attend quarterly SDWMA meeting and give update.
- Provide population status of EDRR regional targets to CDFA statewide assessment.
- Work with the Natural History Museum ‘Urban Canyons Survey Project’, provide EDRR materials to facilitate reporting of EDRR targets.